

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 have been cancelled. Claims 18-53 have been added. No new matter has been included. Applicants reserve the right to pursue original and other claims in this and in other applications.

Claim 18 recites, inter alia, an article management system, comprising “a noncontact electronic tag storing tag data attached to an article managed in a management area; a passage radio communication means that can communicate with the noncontact electronic tag installed in a passage section leading to the management area, wherein the passage radio communication means is configured to communicate with the noncontact electronic tag attached to the article passing through the passage section; a tag check processing means for detecting whether the noncontact electronic tag is permitted to pass through the passage section or is inhibited from passage, where said check processing means further comprises: a multiple tag access processing means for avoiding a collision between said noncontact electronic tag and a second noncontact electronic tag and for reading the tag data stored in said noncontact electronic tag for processing executed by the passage radio communication means, where said multiple tag access processing is enabled when said tag check processing means detects a noncontact electronic tag whose passage is inhibited.”

Ikeda (JP 2001-199511) teaches a system where “[b]ased on this lending-out coat [sic] write-in signal 19e, it updates to ‘1’ which shows collection of books inside a library from ‘0’ which shows in a lending out outside a library for lending out coding of the books” Ikeda, paragraph [0035], emphasis added. Thus, Ikeda teaches storing either “1” or “0.” In other words, Ikeda discloses storing either a signal that books are inside the library, or a signal that books are outside the library.

Ikeda fails to teach or suggest "a tag check processing means for detecting whether the noncontact electronic tag is permitted to pass through the passage section or is inhibited from passage, where said check processing means further comprises: a multiple tag access processing means for avoiding a collision between said noncontact electronic tag and a second noncontact electronic tag and for reading the tag data stored in said noncontact electronic tag for processing executed by the passage radio communication means, where said multiple tag access processing is enabled when said tag check processing means detects a noncontact electronic tag whose passage is inhibited." At best, Ikeda discloses the processing of a single item at time, but does not disclose processing several items at the same time, nor collisions that may occur between multiple items being processed, nor how to resolve conflicts.

ISO/IEC15693-3 ("ISO") discloses the international standards for contactless integrated circuit cards – Vicinity cards. The standards include a variety of different aspects for the operation of vicinity cards pursuant to ISO, including definitions and references, memory organization, protocols for communications and collision, and timing sequencing.

The ISO is directed towards, the setting of standards but the ISO fails to teach or suggest "a tag check processing means for detecting whether the noncontact electronic tag is permitted to pass through the passage section or is inhibited from passage, where said check processing means further comprises: a multiple tag access processing means for avoiding a collision between said noncontact electronic tag and a second noncontact electronic tag and for reading the tag data stored in said noncontact electronic tag for processing executed by the passage radio communication means, where said multiple tag access processing is enabled when said tag check processing means detects a noncontact electronic tag whose passage is inhibited." Nor is there provided in ISO a motivation or suggestion

to combine the teachings of ISO with Ikeda to achieve the claimed invention. For at least this reason, claim 18 is allowable.

Claims 19-22 depend from claim 18 and are allowable for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claim 18.

Claim 23 recites, *inter alia*, an article management system, comprising: a noncontact electronic tag storing tag data attached to an article managed in a management area; a radio communication means that can communicate with said noncontact electronic tag, and wherein the radio communication means communicates with the noncontact electronic tag attached to the article, wherein said radio communication means includes a multiple tag access processing means, comprising: a interrogation communication processing means configured to set a part of a unique ID stored in the noncontact electronic tag as a reference for determining a response timing for causing the noncontact electronic tag to transmit a response data, and transmitting specification data specifying the part of the ID; a response data acquiring processing means configured to acquire the response data of the noncontact electronic tag which did not have collision during the response at the response timing; a response stop processing means configured to transmit a signal for stopping a further response from a noncontact electronic tag for which response data was acquired; and a repetitive processing means which is enabled when a plurality of noncontact electronic tags make a response at the same response timing and one of a response data received by said radio communication means collides with another of a response data, said repetitive processing means configured to change a specification position in the specification data and causing the interrogating communication processing means, the response data acquiring processing means and the response stop processing means to be re-executed."

Ikeda fails to disclose or suggest "a multiple tag access processing means, comprising: a interrogation communication processing means configured to set a part of a

unique ID stored in the noncontact electronic tag as a reference for determining a response timing for causing the noncontact electronic tag to transmit a response data, and transmitting specification data specifying the part of the ID; a response data acquiring processing means configured to acquire the response data of the noncontact electronic tag which did not have collision during the response at the response timing; ... and a ... repetitive processing means configured to change a specification position in the specification data and causing the interrogating communication processing means, the response data acquiring processing means and the response stop processing means to be re-executed.” As noted above, Ikeda At best, Ikeda discloses the processing of a single item at time, but does not disclose processing several items at the same time, nor collisions that may occur between multiple items being processed, nor how to resolve conflicts.

The ISO is directed towards, the setting of standards but the ISO fails to teach or suggest “a multiple tag access processing means, comprising: a interrogation communication processing means configured to set a part of a unique ID stored in the noncontact electronic tag as a reference for determining a response timing for causing the noncontact electronic tag to transmit a response data, and transmitting specification data specifying the part of the ID; a response data acquiring processing means configured to acquire the response data of the noncontact electronic tag which did not have collision during the response at the response timing; ... and a ... repetitive processing means configured to change a specification position in the specification data and causing the interrogating communication processing means, the response data acquiring processing means and the response stop processing means to be re-executed.” Nor is there provided in ISO a motivation or suggestion to combine the teachings of ISO with Ikeda to achieve the claimed invention. For at least this reason, claim 23 is allowable.

Claims 24-34 are dependant from claim 23 and are allowable for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claim 23.

Claim 35 is similar to claim 18 but recites a program and claim 44 is similar to claim 23 but recites a program. As such, claims 35 and 44, and their respective dependent claims, contain similar limitations as claims 18 and 23, respectively, and are allowable for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claims 18 and 23, respectively.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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